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The Seven Years War (1756-1763) as a Cultural Zone of Entanglement: Case Studies of Croatian Captives[1]

In Enlightenment studies, the entangled history methodology has been applied to the aspect of researching the Enlightenment as a cultural process. In this sense, historical entanglement implies the way in which the subject of historical research is constituted at the meeting point or intersection of different contexts. Wartime is particularly suitable for the study of entanglement processes in the eighteenth century due to the possibility of travel, which increased opportunities for intercultural communication and various types of transfers between soldiers of different nationalities and cultural backgrounds. The experience of captured soldiers from the Croatian regions during the Seven Years War is particularly valuable. According to contemporaries, after returning to their homeland, the existing cultural paradigm changed due to cultural innovations such as potato cultivation and Freemasonry, but also less desirable atheism and libertinism. This was the result of intense communication with the officers and soldiers of other nations (both enemy and allied, e.g., both the Prussians and French) during their captivity, which for individuals was paradoxically a period of intense cultural exchange and enlightenment.

Introduction

The post-1989 political changes in Europe brought significant changes to historiographic research paradigms. They began to adopt more integrative, transnational and transborder approaches such as the history of Europeanisation, globalisation, etc. In Croatian historiography, there were also incentives to shift interpretations of historical events, phenomena and processes from the national paradigm to comparative history.[2] However, such laudable initiatives had only

[1] This research was conducted under the EuKoR project financed by the Croatian Science Foundation, number HRZZ-IP-2018-01-2539. An earlier version of this paper was presented at the Enlightenment Congress held in Rotterdam in 2015.

[2] The turning point was the establishment of the Centre for Comparative Historical and Intercultural Studies as part of the History Department at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Science in Zagreb in 2001 (http://ckhis.ffzg.unizg.hr/hr/). This initiative was fostered by collaboration with the Central European University in Budapest and its comparative historical programme. For the theoretical framework, see ROKSANDIĆ 2004.

a faint impact on recent historiographic production, which continued to focus on the national paradigm. So-called "relational history," which is considered an umbrella term for a wide range of approaches that analyse "transfers, interactions, interconnectedness or interdependence of historical phenomena and share the ambition to transcend national interpretive frameworks,"[3] was even less noticeable among Croatian scholars. "Relational approaches" are characteristic mainly of cultural and social history and include comprehensive types of research that focus on interconnectedness as a historical factor. Therefore, a thematic issue that emphasises the history of entanglement is very welcome within the framework of Croatian historiography.

Following the central theme and its interpretative framework, the empirical case study of this paper will examine the relational perspective of cultural transfers which occurred during the Seven Years War (1756–1762). Cultural transfer is thereby understood rather pragmatically "as the global mobility of words, concepts, images, persons, animals, commodities, money, weapons, and other things (understood in a broad sense)".[4] Unlike in the most cultural transfer studies, the source culture will not be defined nationally, in the sense of Prussian or German or French culture, but rather as the Enlightenment culture fostering social interaction and communication because the idea of exchange was central to Enlightenment social thought. The preconditions for the Enlightenment were concepts such as "sociability", "association", "commerce", etc. for it was essential to communicate its central ideas to others.[5] Accordingly, in modern Enlightenment studies the Enlightenment tends to be seen not as a static set of ideas, but as a process of historicised communication,[6] which helped "discourses and practices, languages and values, contexts and representations interact and influence one another".[7]

The case study dealing with the cultural activities of imprisoned soldiers belongs among under-researched topics in the field of cultural history, not only in Croatia but also elsewhere. Violence and culture are rarely seen as compatible, but, unquestionably, censorship becomes less restricted during wartime. Therefore, the following questions will be raised: can a war be considered a cultural zone, where intercultural transfers took place? What were the transfer paths/channels of cultural transmission in prison camps or collection centres for captives? Who were

[3] ČAPSKÁ and STORCHOVÁ 2015: 187. The comparative paradigm remained limited to studying "differences" and "similarities" of national entities. See for example the collection of papers tackling the Croats and Serbs in the eighteenth-century Habsburg Monarchy in ROKSANDIĆ 2014.

[4] I took this pragmatic definition based on Stephen Greenblatt's "cultural mobility" from ROSSINI and TOGGWEILER 2014: 1.

[5] SHEK BRNARDIĆ 2009: 79 and 87.

[6] BÖDEKER 1988: 88-111.

[7] FERRONE 1998: 546.

the intermediaries and recipients? What kind of cultural goods were exchanged? What type of knowledge was transmitted? And finally, can intercultural communication in confinement between captives and their captors be considered a sort of Enlightenment communication? Direct and indirect sources such as contemporary memoirs, biographies and editions published during captivity will be examined and contextualised, showing the modes of transfer, translating practices and the appropriation of new antireligious ideas such as libertinism and materialism in the Croatian context, which were complete cultural novelties at the time.

The Seven Years War as a transfer contact zone

Many wars had been fought before, but the Seven Years War (1756-1763), waged by Prussia and England against France, Austria, Russia, Sweden, Saxony, and most of the smaller German states, was exceptional in many ways.[8] Traditionally, it has been regarded as the "first world war" waged on several continents and rooted in completely secular foundations. Religious disagreements stopped playing a role for the European powers, which were desperately trying to maintain the balance among themselves. The rules of warfare were different than before. The Seven Years War was conducted by adhering to the principles of enlightened military theory; it was a "polite" kind of war, grounded in geometric principles. Units stood in lines (so-called linear tactics), and soldiers were not allowed to assume their positions without having their hair properly dressed. Officers would wear wigs, or at least have their hair powdered and their faces lightly blushed. "Politeness" was supposed to be the watchword of this war,[9] and the experience of those who were engaged in it was by no means ordinary.

Throughout ancient and early modern history, war was treated as an art, which in the Age of Reason gradually gained the status of a rational science due to the use of modern technology. However, for enlightened *philosophes* such as Voltaire, war, along with famine and plague, formed one of the three most disreputable ingredients of the earthly world. In his works, Voltaire repetitively stressed the immorality of war, which opposed the natural inclinations of men. Candide, one of his heroes, witnesses a battle and ponders the causes and effects amid "heroic butchery": cannons, muskets and the bayonet led to the death of thousands of men in a very short period.[10]

In case of the Seven Years War Voltaire seems to have been quite correct: this war cost Prussia and Austria more victims than any other war since 1648. According to

[8] On the Seven Years War generally see SZABO 2007.

[9] On this aspect, see LYNN 2003: 111-144 and DUFFY 1998: 189-267.

[10] Voltaire ridiculed war in chapters three and four of Candide (1759), which was written during the Seven Years War. Cf. VOLTAIRE 1995: 546-550.

the calculations of Frederick the Great himself, Prussia alone lost approximately 500,000 men, that is, the same total as the Thirty Years War. During the siege of Berlin in October 1760, more than 20,000 inhabitants died. The defeats in the Battles of Kolin (1757) and Kunersdorf (1759) were so disastrous for Frederick that he could only state that he had been left with only 32,000 out of the 200,000 soldiers he had at his disposal a few years prior. It was only Frederick's practical philosophy grounded in Stoicism that helped him overcome the experience of this war, "the school of bad luck", which was partly initiated at his own behest.[11] However, such massive losses were not the outcome of a total war, which was introduced only with the French Revolution, but rather as a consequence of the so-called Rococo strategy. Enlightened military theorists, wishing to win solely due to their art of warfare without bloodshed, did not want to acknowledge the brutality of war.

On the other hand, Czech historiographers brought the war campaigns into connection with Bohemia's opening to the Enlightenment. Voltaire, who was interested in these operations because of participation by French troops, testified in his correspondence that these campaigns paradoxically aided the penetration of his manuscripts, carried in the baggage of Frederick II, throughout Bohemia and Moravia. This signalled the beginning of the collapse of censorship in the Bohemian lands.[12] "In superstitious Bohemia, in Austria, the old seat of fanaticism, knowledgeable people are beginning to open their eyes. The images of saints are no longer enjoying the veneration they once did. No matter how much the Court struggled against the entrance of good pieces *(des bons ouvrages)*, truth nonetheless penetrates despite all these adversities," Frederick II wrote to Voltaire in early 1766.[13]

Contemporaries in the Croatian-Hungarian side of the Monarchy made precisely the same observations. Approximately 34,000 *Grenzer* (infantrymen) and 6,000 hussars from the Croatian-Slavonian Military Frontier were available for deployment to the Prussian and Bohemian battlefields.[14] This mobilisation facilitated their contact with soldiers of many nationalities. On the Austrian side, the allied forces included "French and Swedes, Germans from all provinces of Germany, Hungarians and Transylvanians, Italians, Walloons, Croats, Russians, Cossacks and Calmucks."[15] Intercultural encounters could happen in captivity with their Prussian adversaries, as will be discussed.

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11 MÖLLER 1998: 34 and 42.

12 LAVIČKA 1983: 110.

13 Frederick II, Letter to Voltaire of 8 January 1766 (no. 6224). VOLTAIRE 1881: 172-173.

14 BALIĆ 2019: 172.

15 ARCHENHOLZ 1843: 31.

Contemporary witnesses to cultural change

Many Croatian and Hungarian contemporaries argued that the Seven Years War contributed significantly to the spread of good or bad enlightenment among the population thanks to military officers who came back from the war zones. This enlightenment was fostered by reading books, because in the eighteenth-century books were considered the chief media for acquiring knowledge. Officers, as the leading stratum of the military, would bring new ways of thinking after returning to their homeland, which was met with disapproval by their compatriots, so that criticism was inevitable.

The Zagreb canon Baltazar Adam Krčelić (1715-1778), the Croatian aristocrat and former military officer Count Adam Oršić of Slavetić (1748-1820) and the Slovak legal historian of Croatian origin Martin Juraj Kovačić (1744-1821) all unambiguously stated in their memoirs that this war spurred intellectual change. Krčelić, although a proponent of the Catholic Enlightenment, spoke critically in his *Annuae* about the cultural novelties introduced into the Croatian Kingdoms and provided first-hand information. The officers who returned from captivity in 1763 brought with them both good and bad books, according to Krčelić. The Queen Maria Theresa issued a royal decree that all imported books had to be reported to the Croatian ban (viceroy), a post then held by Count Ferenc V. Nádasdy (1708-1783). As a Catholic priest, Krčelić was dumbfounded by the ideas that the returnees were promoting and disseminating among the illiterate population: "… that the human soul was mortal, that all sacred objects, and faith itself, were pure fabrications, and other impious thoughts." He mentioned that these individuals mostly identified themselves as atheists and freemasons, "and only very few as Christians."[16] This observation about the de-Christianisation of returned officers was a Catholic reaction to the radical Enlightenment epitomised by libertinism and atheism, as we shall see.

Martin Juraj Kovačić, the archivist, legal historian and very active Freemason, who is considered the first historian of the Hungarian Enlightenment,[17] looked at the changes from a secular standpoint. He described the history of school reforms in Hungary in his literary journal *Merkur von Ungarn* (1787) and stressed the benefits that the Seven Years War brought to the advancement of learning in the Hungarian lands. First, Kovačić mentioned the flight of students from the war zones in Bohemia, Moravia, Silesia and Upper Saxony, who decided to continue their studies at the University of Tyrnau (Kovačić spoke about it first-hand because he was also a student there) and "aroused a vigorous ambition, which greatly pro-

[16] KRČELIĆ 1952: 457.

[17] ECKHARDT 1924: 10.

moted diligence." In Kovačić's view, the way of thinking (*Denkungsart*) among the Hungarian upper classes changed because the countries where the war had been waged were "at a high degree of culture",[18] and this entanglement of student minds brought new perspectives to Hungarian intellectual life.

Furthermore, Kovačić pointed out that free thought encouraged scepticism, disbelief and irreligiosity, and that "the sons of Mars", that is, officers, were attracted to the sciences *(Wissenschaften)*, and particularly to free-thinking and irreligiosity, which made them appear uncommonly erudite without too much effort before less experienced people. They brought a taste for these things home, where it very quickly spread among the other estates, and became almost a fashion "among the finer classes". The cult of Voltaire emerged, and his name was mentioned in many circles: "(…) and some worshipped him with a servile prejudice, others cursed him, and crossed themselves whenever his name was mentioned, yet neither party was familiar with his writings".[19]

Count Oršić, a former military officer, who wrote his memoirs in 1814, observed the same cultural novelties in Croatia after 1763:

> The potato was unknown then; during the Seven Years War, it was the military that first began to plant them. The military brought venereal disease to Croatia from Saxony and Silesia, which had been unknown until then, while Voltaire's books and a few Freemasons came along. Later, all estates accepted this society, but ever since the Jacobin Club was abolished in France, there have been fewer Freemasons in Croatia as well. ... Culture has increased in several years, ever since people had seen different countries in wars, and by reading various books, but manners and morals have considerably diminished.[20]

According to Krčelić, Kovačić and Oršić, officers of both noble and common origin serving in the Austrian army[21] were considered active transmitters of Enlightenment culture, because their profession allowed them to do things that were otherwise restricted to only the wealthier classes: they had the opportunity to travel, and those who invested time to become literate and multilingual, cosmopolitan and clubbable could form an open public that was predominantly secular and open-minded in outlook and thus prone to novelty. Their distinct profession made them welcome to the same extent in courtly society or in certain associations that allowed membership for commoners as well. By virtue of their social

[18] KOVAČIĆ 1787: 19.

[19] KOVAČIĆ 1787: 19-20.

[20] ORŠIĆ 1868: 276 and 278.

[21] The term "Austrian" was in overall use throughout the eighteenth century, that is, even before the creation of the Austrian Empire, as a designation for both the army and foreign policy.

status, eighteenth-century officers had many opportunities to make contacts in the institutions of sociability.

Travel as a school of Enlightenment

Travel as a means of gaining knowledge and self-enlightenment, which previously characterized noble practices in the form of the *Grand Tour*, became accessible to military professionals from the lower classes primarily through war campaigns. "Plus encore que la *Kavalierreise*, la guerre est la grande ecole de cosmopolitisme," argued the French historian Claude Michaud.[22] By his own account, Croatian officer Antun Matija Reljković (1732-1798) greatly benefitted from the instruction he received in the Seven Years War, which had blessed him with the opportunity to travel:

> During the last Prussian war, which began in 1756 and ended in 1763, and which during the seven years of its duration was nothing other than *a school* especially for young people, an opportunity offered itself to pass through vilayets,[23] countries, and cities for free to those who could not otherwise do it without incurring considerable expense.

> And how people used to say that in the army there are all sorts of things, so it happens that some made money, some lost what they had, and while on duty, some observed wonderful countries, mighty cities, noble towns, and nicely appointed villages and districts. They observed their establishment, their service to God, their work in the fields, manners at home, grooming of cattle, the progress [*prohod*] of handicrafts [...] [24]

The young and pious first-lieutenant of peasant origin and little formal education apparently benefited considerably from his wartime experiences.[25] He was in a position to compare foreign countries, especially Saxony and Silesia, to his homeland Slavonia, and to learn how these regions were organized. The discourse on popular enlightenment set in, and Reljković observed that those nations pub-

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22 MICHAUD 1980: 378.

23 Turkish for "native regions."

24 RELJKOVIĆ 1988: 875-876. Reljković, born on January 6, 1732, was obviously thinking of himself.

25 Reljković participated in the Battle of Kolin (June 1757) in Bohemia, the Battle of Breslau (December 1757), where he got captured by the Prussians, and later in the Battle of Maxen (November 1759), where he was wounded in his left arm, and in the Battle of Torgau (November 1760). As a prisoner of war, he was stationed in Frankfurt an der Oder, which was a collective centre for Austrian captives from the first years of war.

lished useful books in their native languages, such as fables (Aesop, Phaedrus), moral stories for children and adults (*Fables of Bidpai*), economic books (Virgil and Columella), and most of all satires (Horace, Juvenal). Translations also mattered, and all of these books contributed to the orderliness of their countries. Reljković felt deceived because he thought before that there had been no country better appointed than his own, and the reason was that he had never seen others. Even so, he was not jealous. He took great pleasure in observing foreign countries, and he contemplated what he might bring home after the war ended. Ultimately, this was a little booklet called *The Satyr, or the Wild Man* which he wrote as a Prussian prisoner of war during his captivity at Frankfurt an der Oder in 1761 and published anonymously in Dresden in 1762. At home, it was extraordinarily well received, and in two years 1,200 copies were completely sold out.[26]

Cultural exchange in captivity

However odd it may seem today, Reljković's experience in Prussian captivity was by no means unique. He was a junior officer in the Austrian Imperial Army and as such subject to international law, which prescribed the treatment of prisoners of war. This was regulated through the so-called cartels that were concluded between the warring sides. In the Seven Years War, such treaties were concluded between Prussia and the Holy Roman Empire (1757), and France and Russia (1759), and Britain and France (1759). Military captivity was deemed a temporary condition and could be ended by payment of a ransom or exchanges. Home governments usually (or nominally) paid the captors to support the prisoners, which included medical staff and native chaplains. [27] What still strikes us today is the fact that the captive officers were held in custody in private homes rather than in dungeons until the ransom had been paid or they were exchanged. Captivity sometimes sounded like a "joke", as Prince de Ligne expressed it himself,[28] because the captives had considerable leisure time, which might be spent wandering around on parole, or drinking and entertaining themselves in different ways.[29] An officer's parole was highly esteemed, and breaking it by escape as a means of "self-ransom" was considered an impermissible breach of honour.

It was a civilised kind of war being waged, and captivity had a similar character. Duffy described the case of a Prussian officer who received compliments from a

[26] RELJKOVIĆ: 1988, 877.

[27] DUFFY 1998: 266-267.

[28] "It was something of a joke in the English and French armies to be taken prisoner ... You had supper with Prince Ferdinand of Brunswick and the next day you were back with your regiment." LIGNE 1795: 243.

[29] One could see Prussian officers walking in the royal park at Schönbrunn. DUFFY 1998: 266.

friend when he noticed the excellent relationship that this man had with his Austrian fellow-officer. "Your quarrel with the enemy officers is confined to combat," he said, "Once that is over, all hostility comes to an end."[30] The conditions of imprisoned officers seemed to be mutually satisfactory, particularly at the beginning of the war: the Prussians would enjoy Austrian beer and wine, while the Austrians would have access to a more intellectual environment in the lodgings of their Prussian captors. Learned conversations and rich libraries were available, providing opportunities for self-enlightenment to those individuals who wished to pursue it.

In his collection of biographies (1795), the Franciscan biographer Josip Jakošić (1738–1804) described the circumstances of Reljković's custody in Frankfurt an der Oder[31]: "He [i.e. Reljković] used the domestic library of his host, a very honourable man, with pleasure, and he made so many efforts until he was allowed an instructor and was able to speak and read French in a short time."[32] His proficiency in French became so conspicuous that he even managed to translate a prayer book, *Slavonian Booklets*, into the native language of his captured Slavonian comrades.[33] But why did Reljković learn and translate from French, and not from German for example? French was the language of culture used in the Republic of Letters, the language of diplomacy and international relations,[34] and the language of communication in the army.

Learning French was the preoccupation of another engaged intellectual who saw to the spiritual needs of Croatian captives in the fortress of Cüstrin: the young Franciscan friar and military chaplain Blaž Tadijanović (1727-1797).[35] He surrendered with the soldiers from the Brod Regiment, who were captured after the battle of Breslau (1757), and stayed with them until the end of the war.[36] Expanding literacy or popular enlightenment seems to have been one of the most widespread practices during the time in captivity. Tadijanović even wrote a little Illyrian (Croatian)-German conversational grammar,[37] which had been published

30 ORTMANN 1759: 61.

31 Along with Berlin, Halle, Königsberg and Breslau, Frankfurt an der Oder was considered one of the chief centres of the Enlightenment in Prussia. MÜLLER 1990: 219.

32 ŠREPEL 1899: 130.

33 RELJKOVIĆ 1761.

34 BARBIER 1993: 274. See more about this cultural phenomenon in REAU 1952.

35 "In captivitate constitutus, quod supererat temporis servitiis spiritualibus, linguae Gallicae condiscendae impendit..." ŠREPEL 1899: 126.

36 Around 17,635 Austrian soldiers were captured. Tadijanović stayed without being paid either from the Austrian or Prussian treasury. He was sustained by the captives, both officers and common soldiers. ŠREPEL 1899: 126. The Masonic historian Branko Šömen stated that Tadijanović received some financial support from the Magdeburg military lodge *La parfaite union*, but there is no record of this. ŠÖMEN 2013: 132.

37 TADIJANOVIĆ 1761.

in Magdeburg in 1761, that is, during wartime.[38] In the introduction, he admitted that he wrote it at the request of many Croatian-speaking prisoners, and did so at his own expense. The soldiers were imprisoned in the fortress for a full five years and needed to converse with the Prussians in German.[39] The choice of vocabulary reveals the range of possible topics for small talk: those dealing with God and spiritual issues, then the environment and livestock, work and clothing and time, while most of them focused on the human condition and social contacts.

To express one's state of mind or emotions to a German-speaking person, Tadijanović offered a soldier an entire range of expressive words. The section on the soul contains the words "soul" (*duscha*, *die Seele*), "nature" (*chiud*, *das Gemuth*), "reason" (*razum*, *die Vernunft*), "mind" (*razumlenye*, *der Verstand*), "will" (*vollya*, *der Wille*), "pleasure" (*nasladnost*, *die Wollust*), "joy" (*veselye*, *die Freude*), "sorrow" (*tuhga*, *die Traurigkeit*), "charity" (*milloserdje*, *die Barmherzigkeit*), "resentment" (*nenavidnost*, *die Mißgunst*), "love" (*ljubav*, *die Liebe*), "hatred" (*mehrznost*, der Haß), "anger" (*sercsba*, *ljuttinna*, *der Zorn*), "fear" (*strah*, *die Furcht*), and "hope" (*uffanye*, *die Hoffnung*). Another section is focused on words dealing with sociability [*opchenye*], and it might be concluded that the soldiers were offered a sort of vocabulary of sensibility, by which they could express their individual feelings in social interactions.

The sentences indicating descriptions of the captives' leisure activities constitute another interesting feature. They could entertain themselves by singing, dancing, jumping, playing instruments, fencing, playing cards or gambling. "I am going to the Church," one might say. "We are going to the tavern," another might reply. And here we find out about practices of their pastimes. However, except for the church and the pub, the officer had a third possibility for entertainment: joining a military Masonic lodge.

Military lodges as places of intercultural encounters

Besides libraries and various reading circles, military lodges might be considered the foremost institutions of sociability, which served as a space for the self-enlightenment of the officer corps, both captors and captives. The Seven Years War has been usually regarded as the earliest period at which many regimental lodges appeared with armies in the field. They could be "travelling" or "mobile"

[38] Tadijanović first published the prayer book *Sertum ex diversis floribus* [A wreath of various flowers] (1761) in the Illyrian language in Magdeburg, but since many soldiers could not read it, he compiled an Illyrian grammar. ŠREPEL 1899: 126.

[39] "The state they were in was pitiable; with only tatters of clothes they lay in the casemates with hardly any straw: and as they could not live on their pay they used to work for a trifle by building for the citizens;…". ARCHENHOLZ 1843: 497-498.

as well as "stationary", and their general tendency was "to strengthen the bonds of friendship, and to diffuse among the officers – both commissioned and non-commissioned – and the rank and file, a spirit of charity, fraternal kindness, and subordination".[40] These principles are easily recognisable from their founding names: "unity", "peace", "concord", etc. According to Lajos Abafi, officers were at the time the most ardent "supporters and apostles of Freemasonry".[41]

For the Austrian side the Prussian fortress city of Magdeburg represented the largest collection centre for Austrian (and French) captives. In 1759 or 1760, a group of Austrian, Swedish, Württemberg officers along with members of other units of the German Imperial Army decided to establish a temporary Masonic lodge, *La parfaite Union*, with French as the official language. Its transitory nature confirmed the fact that at the beginning the brethren neither wanted to apply themselves to any of the Great Lodges, nor to arrange the monetary resources necessary for a lodge to function.[42] Two more lodges were established in Magdeburg by French and Austrian captives: *De la Félicité* and *La Constance,* both founded in 1761. The latter was established by Austrian officers because of disagreement with their French brethren from *De la Félicité*. Both lodges were branches of the Berlin mother lodges, which implied unrestrained communication between the two seemingly adversary sides.[43]

The French names of the military lodges along with French as the official language in the Prussian dominions should not be surprising. Apart from the presence of French prisoners, the reason for this practice might have been the very involvement of Frederick the Great, *le roi philosophe* and a great Francophile, who considered German barbarian, and made French the official language at his court in Potsdam. Moreover, he proclaimed French the official language at the Prussian Academy of Science, which had to have a French president and was publishing his *Mémoires* in French.[44]

If we take all this into account, then it is clear that the young first lieutenant Reljković was first instructed in French, which was obviously the language of communication among the Prussian Masonic brethren, and more probably as the language of the army in general. The presence of French officers in Magdeburg may have also played some role. The French historian Grappin argues that French officers were the first to have disseminated the spirit of *Encyclopédie* among the German and most likely Austrian officers. *Encyclopédie ou Dictionnaire raisonné*

40 GOULD 1899: 118.

41 ABAFI: 1891: 172-178.

42 It was obviously a sort of ambulatory lodge, which was usually founded in regiments, and could be moved from one place to another. QUOI-BODIN 1983: 550 and 553.

43 At the end of war most of these provisional lodges were dissolved.

44 RÉAU 1952: 49.

des sciences, des arts et des métiers, initiated in 1751, was previously unknown among the broader German-speaking public because of its atheistic reputation. Freemasons in the French army were closely associated with Diderot's and d'Alambert's project and to the *École militaire*, which had preserved her from censorship. Therefore, French officers may have played a significant role in its diffusion.[45]

The historians of Freemasonry generally agree that the first Croatian officers who brought Freemasonry to Croatia were those brethren initiated into the *La parfaite Union* Lodge in Magdeburg, where captured Austrian officers were gathered. At some time after the war, between 1764 and 1769, Count Ivan VIII Nepomuk Drašković (1740-1787) founded the first military lodge in the Military Frontier, *L'Amitié de guerre* in Glina.[46] Its French name explains the dependence on Prussian lodges and reflects the wartime friendship between soldiers on opposing sides. Besides the enlightenment of the officer corps, the military lodges were also a good forum for negotiations on the release and care of prisoners. Grappin concisely summarised their strivings: a desire to improve civil society, to contribute to the progress of their governments at home, and to make a social life more just and fraternal. Masonic sociability was perhaps the most widespread form of intercultural communication in Enlightenment Europe.

The cultural exchange of radical books

The Catholic Canon Krčelić could not escape the observation in his memoirs that the returned officers were the first to have liberated themselves from the chains not only of superstition, but of religious morality in general. In Krčelić's memoirist narrative, we find an interesting story about how the Catholic ecclesiastical authorities desperately sought to handle the growing incredulity in Croatia after the Seven Years War. After a handful of Frontier officers had learned of some manifestation of the Devil in a small village near Zagreb, they rushed to learn more about it. They managed to discover the fraud, which was allegedly arranged by a local chaplain and his mistress to be left alone. Nevertheless, Krčelić charged the officers as inveterate unbelievers, and that the main motive of their action was nothing but atheism. There was even a growing consensus among the public that this whole story was set up by the ecclesiastical authorities "in order

[45] GRAPPIN 1963: 222.

[46] GOULD 1899: 204. According to Quoy-Bodin, the names of the lodges express Masonic virtues: In 1789 32% of the French lodges bore in their names the ideas of *Union* or *Réunion*. Other themes included *Amitié* (friendship), *Pureté* (purity), *Franchise* (candour), *Régularité* (order), *Harmonie* (harmony). QUOY-BODIN 1982: 175. In the case of Austrian prisoners, the names included virtues such as *Union* (union), *Constance* (constancy), *Félicité* (happiness), and *Amitié* (friendship).

to restrain the officers of the Military Frontier, who lived too dissolutely and who were imbued with atheism due reading the books imported from Saxony."[47] Why was the denial of the Devil rather than God so worrisome for the Catholic divines in Croatia?

The contentious contemporary debate on the (non)existence of the Devil and other demonic creatures had its origin in the teaching of Spinoza from ca. 1660, and up to the 1750s it preoccupied Catholic theologians as well. Although this was a time when witch-hunting was restricted and in decline in Croatia, anyone who would dare to deny Satan's existence could still be easily classified as an "atheistic thinker, naturalist and libertine." These radicals, Jonathan Israel argued, declined any conventional notions of magic, exorcism, demonic possession, witchcraft and spirits, etc. at the level both of high and popular culture. In Naturalist teaching, belief in magic and demons was rejected altogether and this was regarded as part of a broader attack on revealed religion and its authority.[48] It is interesting to see that for a Catholic priest such as Krčelić, who had been traditionally considered a moralist of his time and by no means a narrow-minded censor, the problem was not a lack of piety or excessive reading of Protestant books, which was the case throughout the entire period of the Counter-Reformation. Now, for the first time, criticism was pointed to the lack of *any* religion on the part of certain officers.

In his testimony, Krčelić clearly established a connection between lack of belief by officers and their reading of questionable books from Saxony. Unfortunately, we do not know which books were in question apart from Voltaire's, as Kovačić and Count Oršić reported. Unrestrained communication between Prussian and Austrian officers during the Seven Years War could facilitate the exchange of ideas and different media, but reality in the Habsburg Monarchy under the reign of the pious Maria Theresa was something else. The dissemination of dangerous books after the war might have contributed to the enforcement of censorship in the hands of the court physician Gerhard van Swieten (1700-1772) and to banning of most works by both Voltaire and Rousseau under the pretext of radical impiety in 1765 and again in 1774. Unlike in Poland and Russia, any translation of their writings was strictly forbidden, and it was punishable not only to sell them in bookshops, but also to keep them in private libraries.[49]

Reading and adhering to Voltaire was considered not only a pretext for scepticism regarding revealed or dogmatic Christianity, but also expressed anti-

47 KRČELIĆ 1952: 504.

48 ISRAEL 2001: 376-382.

49 Cf. *Catalogus librorum a commissione aulica prohibitorum*, the catalogue of proscribed books in the period from 1762 until 1776, which pointed to the firm resolve of the Habsburg government to suppress the wave of deism and atheism in its territory after the Seven Years War. For Voltaire's reception and Voltairianism in the Balkans, see MAGGS 1980.

clericalism. As previously stated, in the lands with a strong Catholic tradition, "Voltairianism" could never become a public fashion as in Prussia or Russia. Due to the close relations between Empress Catherine the Great with the French *philosophe*, fops in Russian salons could easily debate on Voltaire and his philosophical and literary works as the chief topics of light conversation. The Orthodox and Protestant Churches were never the objects of Voltaire's attacks. The famous phrase "Écrasez l'infame!" ("Crush the loathsome thing!")[50] (1762) was never directed against them. Moreover, Frederick and Catherine had very good contacts with the notorious *philosophe*. Their religious policy was tolerant and the churches in both Prussia and Russia subject to state control. On the other hand, Voltaire's Croatian supporters had to remain hidden in a Catholic environment, and we can discern their existence primarily through the pointed social criticism in different sermons or from memoirs such as those by Canon Krčelić or Count Oršić.

Voltaire was not an atheist, but rather a deist, who theoretically believed in God, but denied the revealed religion exemplified by Christianity. His deism was intellectual in nature, believing that only reason leads to the cognition of God. Because of Voltaire's stance that all positive religion, be it Catholic, Calvinist or Jewish, is tantamount to fanaticism and superstition, he was regarded as the greatest enemy of contemporary churches.[51] However, complete *irreligion*, based on materialistic worldviews,[52] represented a greater threat to society, about which Canon Krčelić complained. The lack of religion was a route to an immoral and undisciplined society. It seemed that in the eyes of Christian moralists, the main problem arose from the relative thinking and immoral behaviour of these "enlightened" groups rather than from intolerance of their (ir)religious predilections. The other name for irreligion was *libertinism*,[53] which constituted a real threat with grave moral repercussions in the eighteenth-century social life. The Bohemian apologist Bohuslav Jan Hertwig (1723-1779) pointed that its name comes from "freedom *(libertate)* itself, or that natural faculty, whereby everybody is

[50] Referring to the Catholic Church.

[51] ECKHARDT 1924: 65.

[52] The so-called "clandestine treatises" explicitly sought to prove the existence of a material or mortal soul. The most famous of this genre was the *Traité des trois imposteurs* (The Three Imposters) or *the L'Esprit de Spinosa* (The Spirit of Spinosa), which dated from the turn of the 17th into the 18th century. It was a muddle of atheistic ideas taken mainly from the Dutch irreligious philosopher Spinoza and from older libertine tradition. By questioning the existence of an immortal soul and postulating the existence of a material God, those ideas propagated a form of atheism and materialism, which was usually called Spinozism.

[53] Libertinism is usually paired with indifferentism, which designated a belief that all religions are equal, that is, that there is no one true religion.

allowed to do what one pleases."[54] Debauchery and dissolution were the main traits of self-proclaimed libertines, for whom pleasure and gallantry were the only pursuit in life.[55]

The materialistic emphasis on sensual pleasure could be understood literally by officers in the Military Border, who could easily accept this attitude toward life and began to live dissolutely. Since there was no afterlife, they could live for the present. This aroused great concern not only for the Church, but also for the political authorities, particularly for Queen Maria Theresa, who encouraged Catholic theologians to publish books refuting the libertine positions.[56] On 3 May 1767, she issued a royal decree aimed at eradicating libertinism as the greatest evil, which was dispatched to the entire territory of the Habsburg Monarchy. Ban Ferenc Nádasdy forwarded this royal decree, explicitly requiring the annihilation of books dealing with libertinism to the Croatian Parliament[57] and to the Croatian-Slavonian counties in the spring and summer 1767: "The holders of books, who either in a specific manner pave the way by embracing such condemned libertinism and indifferentism, or reject religion by amusing themselves with the mysteries of the faith, are obliged to burn them within eight days of the promulgation of the present letter. Those who will be found to possess or read such books will be punished, including those who fail to report those perpetrate this damnable transgression."[58]

Conclusion

Entangled history is essentially trans-cultural and focuses on relationships between societies. It assumes that they are formed through interconnectedness

[54] HERTWIG 1776: 12. In his apologetic work *Antidotum libertinismi moderni* (Prague, 1768) the Bohemian Premonstratensian Hertwig discussed the origin and development of libertinism, its chief errors and the most dangerous effects. He counted English authors among the "new" libertines and cited the *Discourse of Free-thinking* (1713) by Anthony Collins (1676-1729), then Matthew Tindal (1657-1733), Thomas Morgan (d. 1743) and Thomas Chubb (1679-1747). The book was widely read in the Croatian territories as well and even reprinted in Osijek in 1776.

[55] FEHER 1997: 10-47.

[56] KUCHAŘOVÁ 2001: 36. The Croatian Jesuit Martin Sabolović (1730-1801) left the manuscript *Considerationes de philosophia libertinorum* (Balsani, 1767) in the Archive of the Croatian Academy of Arts and Science in Zagreb. These were the Latin excerpts of *Riflessioni su la filosofia del bello spirito* (Balssano, 1767) by the Italian Jesuit Giovambattista Noghera (1719-1784), who was a rhetoric professor at the University of Vienna. The book dealt with the dissemination of the ideas of *ésprits forts*, or "strong spirits", and the proponents of natural revealed religions.

[57] KRIŽMAN 1971: 240-241.

[58] Records of Zagreb County. Actorum generalium congregationum 20dae Julii 1767, HR-HDA-1003, fasc. 59, no 1127, 1v.

with each other.[59] In the eighteenth century, the very concept of the Enlightenment was understood as a phenomenon that encouraged communication between the people and the circulation of goods, practices, and discourses in order to enlighten the world and to remove the darkness of ignorance. The Seven Years War paradoxically proved to be a very appropriate cultural zone for social interaction and various transfers, since soldiers from many nations participated in it and were given the opportunity to travel and communicate with each other.

The case studies of captured soldiers and officers from the Croatian-Slavonian Military Border were particularly good examples of cultural transfers, since they brought home many cultural novelties such as the potato, radical books, and Freemasonry, which were noted by contemporaries. Experience in captivity created changes in the returnees that were often criticised at home. Moreover, undesirable religious deviations provoked a vehement reaction on the part of the political and ecclesiastical authorities. Soldiers and officers, who circulated between countries, thus became the agents of transfer, who disseminated knowledge and objects from one cultural zone to another.[60] The research into similar case studies in the Croatian context has yet to be conducted.

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[59] BAUCK and MAIER 2015.

[60] ESPAGNE 2014.

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Sedmogodišnji rat (1756-1763) kao kulturna zona isprepletanja: slučajevi hrvatskih zarobljenika

U prosvjetiteljskim studijima metodologija historije isprepletanja primjenjuje se u aspektu istraživanja prosvjetiteljstva kao kulturnoga procesa. U tom smislu historijsko isprepletanje podrazumijeva način na koji se predmet povijesnoga istraživanja konstituira na susretištu ili križanju različitih konteksta. Za istraživanje procesa isprepletanja u 18. stoljeću vrijeme ratnih događanja posebno je prikladno zbog mogućnosti putovanja, a time i povećanih prilika za interkulturnu komunikaciju i raznorazne transfere između vojnika različitih narodnosti i kulturne pozadine. Iskustvo zarobljenih vojnika iz hrvatskih krajeva u Sedmogodišnjem ratu posebno je dragocjeno jer je prema svjedočenju suvremenika nakon njihova povratka u domovinu nastupila promjena kulturne paradigme zbog unošenja kulturnih noviteta poput sadnje krumpira, slobodnoga zidarstva, ali i nepoželjnog ateizma i libertinizma. To je bila posljedica intenzivne komunikacije sa časnicima i vojskom ostalih naroda (i protivničkih i savezničkih, npr. i Prusa i Francuza) u vrijeme zarobljeništva koje je za pojedince na paradoksalan način bilo razdoblje intenzivne kulturne razmjene i prosvjetljivanja.

Ključne riječi: Sedmogodišnji rat, radikalno prosvjetiteljstvo, kulturna razmjena, kulturni transfer, slobodno zidarstvo

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